

SCENIC BYWAYS

Missouri has a section of the nation's first interstate highway; the allure of Route 66 and the nation's "Mother Road"—U.S. Route 40; and more major river crossings than any state in the Union. But to find the truly scenic nuggets of Missouri's highway system, you need to get off the beaten path and look right in your own backyard.

Missouri has four roads that have been designated as Scenic Byways, including two that have been recognized nationally as National Scenic Byways. They are Little Dixie Highway, Crowley's Ridge Parkway, Cliff Drive and Spirit of Kansas City Regional Byway. The list of specially designated scenic routes may soon begin growing as more and more communities become familiar with the benefits of MoDOT's scenic byway program.

With the diverse nature of the Missouri landscape – from the Ozark Mountains to the banks of the nation's two greatest rivers – why doesn't Missouri have more recognized Scenic Byways?

"That's a good question," says MoDOT Outdoor Advertising Manager Scott Taylor,

coordinator of the Scenic Byways program. "I think it's just a matter of more communities learning about the program and what it can mean for their areas."

Under the National Scenic Byways Program, established in 1991 by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation can recognize certain roads as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based on their archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities.

There are 95 such byways in 39 states. The Federal Highway Administration promotes the collection as America's Byways, a distinctive assortment of American roads, their stories and treasured places. They are roads to the heart and soul of America. Byways are exclusive because of their outstanding qualities, not because byways are confined to a select group of people.

Managing the intrinsic qualities – the natural, cultural and historical features of the road – that shape each byway's story and interpreting the story are equally important in improving the quality of the visitors' experience. The National Scenic Byways Program is founded upon the strength of the leaders for individual byways. It is a voluntary, grass roots program that recognizes and supports outstanding roads by providing resources to help manage the qualities within the broader byway corridor. One of the underlying principles of the program is that it is about recognition, not regulation.

Anyone may nominate a road for possible designation by the secretary, but the nomination must be submitted through a state's official scenic-byway agency and include a corridor-management plan designed to

preserve and enhance the unique qualities of the byway.

The byways themselves typically are supported through a network of individuals who volunteer their time and effort. It is a bottom-up, grass roots-oriented program. Local citizens and communities create the vision for their byway, identify the resources comprising the intrinsic qualities, and form the theme or story that stirs the interest and imagination of visitors about the byway and its resources. Local citizens and communities decide how best to balance goals, strategies and actions for promoting the byway and preserving its qualities. The vision, goals, strategies and actions for the byway are laid out in the corridor-management plan required for the byway.

Nomination is not about filling out an application. It's all about telling the byway's story. That's the premise that drives the FHWA's work on requesting nominations for possible national designation. In Missouri, nominations may be submitted at any time to the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee which meets semi-annually and is composed of individuals representing tourism, the motoring public, and the Missouri departments of Conservation, historic preservation, outdoor advertising, state parks and Transportation.

MoDOT is currently working with local groups in Boone, St. Charles, Lafayette and Crawford counties on scenic-byway nominations. Taylor acknowledges, too, that the recently opened section of the Ozark Mountain Highroad near Branson "has a lot of the attributes that would meet the criteria."

Missouri is a unique state with a variety of natural scenery, recreational areas, parks, historic sites and communities. Roadways provide easy access to these areas and the scenic byways program is designed to promote their special qualities. One of the key benefits of the program is the added economic opportunities and increased tourism provided to communities along the designated route. A program promoted statewide through maps and other literature can expand the number of visitors to an area, which can generate economic growth and increase community recognition.

For more information or to pick up a Scenic Byway Application, contact Scott Taylor at taylor1@mail.modot.state.mo.us, or the

Little Dixie Highway

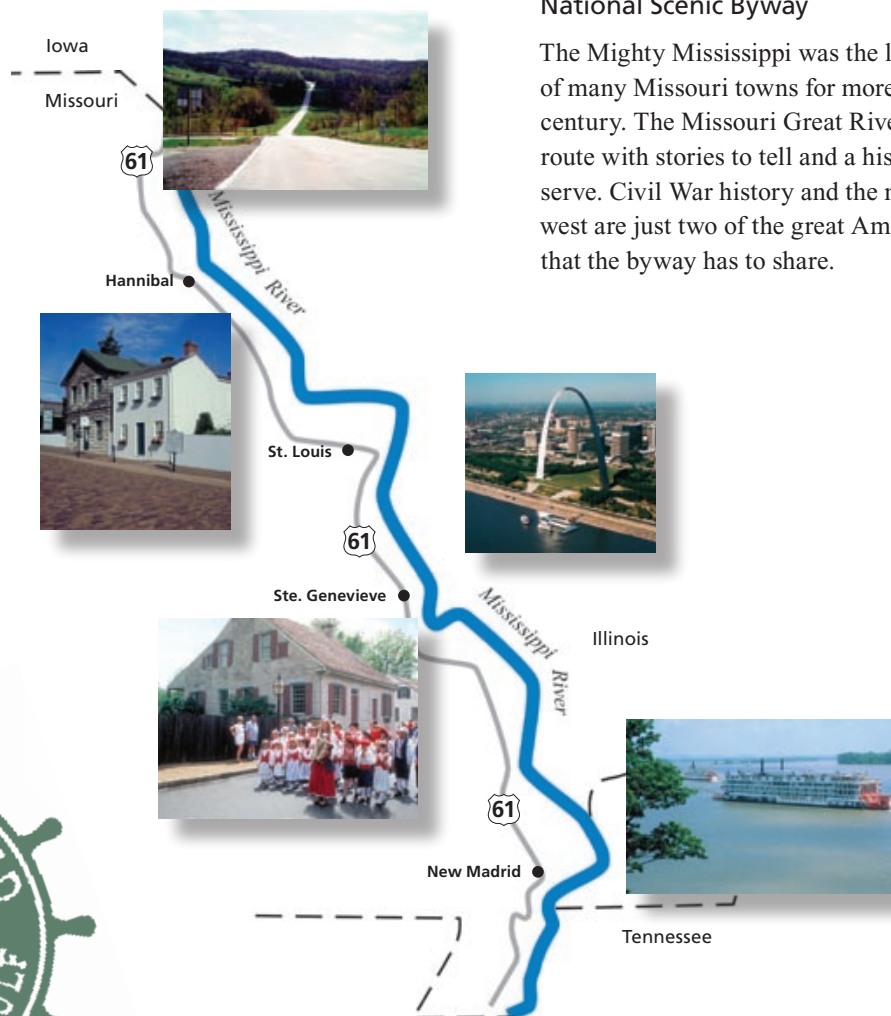


Missouri Department of Transportation at the following address:

Scenic Byways Program
P.O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Call toll-free 1-888 ASK MODOT

Great River Road National Scenic Byway

The Mighty Mississippi was the lifeblood of many Missouri towns for more than a century. The Missouri Great River Road is a route with stories to tell and a history to preserve. Civil War history and the movement west are just two of the great American tales that the byway has to share.





The man who characterized the golden age of the Mississippi River left a legacy of sites behind on the Missouri Great River Road. Mark Twain's hometown of Hannibal as well as many other buildings, museums and wildlife refuges honor the memory of this famous American writer.

The Missouri Great River Road tells the story of the people who came to the Mississippi when it was still a frontier. It also tells the story of people who lived here before the United States became a nation. Drive the Great River Road and find out for yourself what story it tells.

Traveling the Great River Road

To take in the Great River Road, begin your drive at the northeast corner of the state on Route 61 and follow it past Canton and La Grange. At Hannibal, take Route 79 and continue past Louisiana to Interstate 70. Travel through St. Louis and continue south on Route 61/67. When the highways splits continue to the end of the Missouri Great River Road and the beginning of the Arkansas Great River Road.

Little Dixie Highway of the Great River Road

National Scenic Byway

The Little Dixie/Mississippi Flyway Byway is home to a culture expressing a unique southern flair. Accents of the south are revealed in the area's Victorian-era streetscapes and plantation-era mansions. This touch of the south has earned the region its nickname, Little Dixie. The area reminds its travelers of the far-reaching effects of slavery, the Civil War and the nation's reconstruction.

The Mississippi River played an enormous role in the shaping of the physical and cultural features of the area. The Little Dixie Scenic Byway stretches out alongside the river. Limestone bluffs along the highway

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What are Intrinsic Qualities?

Intrinsic quality means scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological or natural features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable or distinctly characteristic of an area.

Archaeological quality involves those characteristics of the scenic byway corridor that are physical evidence of historic or prehistoric life that are visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted.

Cultural quality is evidence and expressions of the customs or traditions of a distinct group of people. Cultural features include, but are not limited to, crafts, music, dance, rituals, festivals, speech, food, special events and vernacular architecture that are currently practiced.

Historic quality encompasses legacies of the past that are distinctly associated with physical elements of the landscape, whether natural or man made, that are of such historic significance that they educate the viewer and stir an appreciation of the past.

Natural quality applies to those features in the visual environment that are in a relatively undisturbed state. These features pre-date the arrival of human populations, and may include geological formations, fossils, landforms, water bodies, vegetation and wildlife.

Recreational quality involves outdoor recreational activities directly associated with, and dependent upon, the natural and cultural elements of the corridor's landscape.

Scenic quality is the heightened visual experience derived from the view of natural and man-made elements of the visual environment.

Scenic Byways

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offer stunning views of the mighty Mississippi, and the towns of Clarksville and Louisiana allow access to the river. The Mississippi Flyway Byway is part of the Great River Road, a path of highway that runs alongside the river through several states.

Getting to Little Dixie from St. Louis and I-70

From Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, follow I-70 west for 15 miles to Exit 220, Route 79. Follow Route 79 north 45 miles to Clarksville, where your journey begins.

The Little Dixie/Mississippi Flyway Scenic Byway from Clarksville

Head north from Clarksville, the byway will first pass the Lock & Dam #24, the Holcim Concrete grounds, Silo Park and the Clarksville Refuge, all of which will give the traveler the opportunity to view the river and its attendant wildlife. Continuing north past two scenic overlooks, the traveler will arrive at the proposed Buffalo Slough/Island interpretive site, a prime spot for viewing waterfowl. The byway now travels through the city of Louisiana. As the byway leaves

Louisiana, it passes through the rich, fertile soils of the bottomlands. These lands have been continuously farmed since the early 1800s.

From the bottomlands, the traveler enters the northernmost portion of the byway. Here, the river and its environs continue to be the dominating feature of this section. The 6,700-acre Ted Shanks Conservation Area and the 1,300-acre DuPont Reservation Conservation Area lie at the end of the Scenic Byway.

All told, the byway parallels the Mississippi River for almost 30 miles from Clarksville to Pike County's northern boundary.

Crowley's Ridge Parkway National Scenic Byway

Crowley's Ridge, characterized by sand, gravel and deep gullies, has formed a primary route of transport and commerce for area residents for several centuries. During different time periods, the various inhabitants of different nationalities used the ridge to escape the swamps and wetlands. A combination of land travel on the ridge and connecting rivers provided a means of subsistence over a vast corridor of time and place.

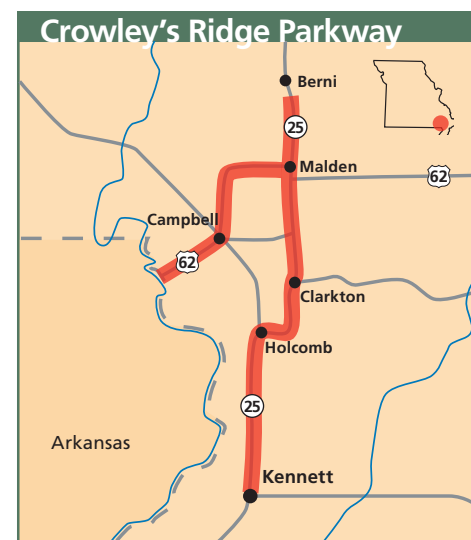
There are several ways to reach this byway:

The eastern end of the byway can be reached by following Route 62, east from St. Francis, Ark. This route is a continua-

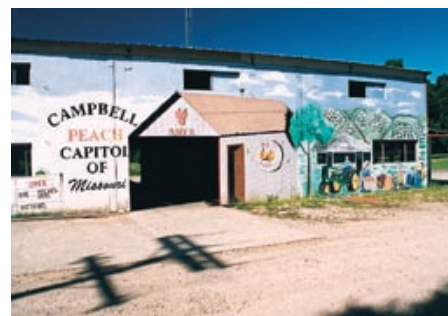
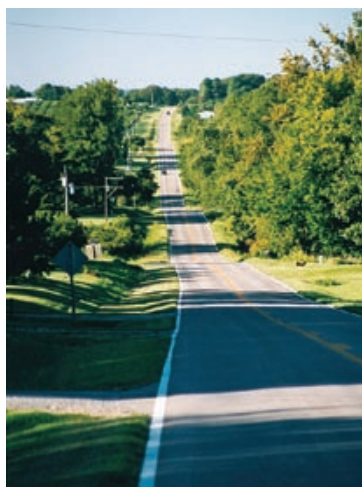
tion of Crowley's Ridge National Scenic Byway. The southern end of the byway at Kennett can be reached from either Rector, Ark. (on Arkansas' Byway), on routes 90 and 84, or from Interstate 55 at exit 19 going west on Route 84. The northern end of the byway can be reached from I-55 (exit 66 at Sikeston) going west on Route 60 to Dexter, and then traveling south on Route 25.

Cliff Drive Scenic Byway

The Cliff Drive corridor passes right through Kansas City in scenic and historic George E. Kessler Park. The drive is significant for its historic and natural qualities and represents a fine example of historic urban



Crowley's Ridge Parkway



Cliff Drive Scenic Byway



design. The design and planning effort of the byway is known worldwide. Additionally, Cliff Drive and the surrounding park were uniquely integral to the evolution and development of Kansas City as a major metropolitan area.

Cliff Drive preserves natural features unique to this portion of the Missouri River Valley. Some of these features include limestone bluffs, natural vegetation and wildlife. These features are particularly unusual because they are located immediately adjacent to the city core, within a heavily urbanized environment.

Cliff Drive is located adjacent (just northeast) of the convergence of Interstates 70, 35, and 29, and just south of the Missouri

River. The byway runs approximately 4 1/4 miles from the intersection of Paseo and Independence Avenue, through to Indian Mound on Gladstone Boulevard at Belmont Boulevard.

Spirit of Kansas City Regional Scenic Byway

The Spirit of Kansas City Regional Scenic Byway interweaves an 8-mile auto route with the Riverfront Heritage Trail. The trail is a bi-state 9-mile-long ribbon of green spaces, pedestrian and bicycle paths, historical markers and dramatic public artworks designed to link and enhance Kansas City's historic, cultural and recreational treasures, beginning at the riverfront where Kansas City was born. The byway extends from Kansas City, Kan., to the edge of Richard L.

Berkley Riverfront Park in Missouri. Eventually it will connect with the Cliff Drive Scenic Byway.

Both projects promote cultural tourism by linking the downtown business districts of both the Kansas and Missouri sides of the city, the River Market, the Central Industrial District, and the Westside, Quality Hill and Strawberry Hill neighborhoods. ■

Bob Brendel is project development outreach coordinator at MoDOT General Headquarters.

